

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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EO 11652: NA  
TAGS: PGOV, PINS, PINT, GH  
SUBJ: PRESS PLAY ON UNION GOVERNMENT

1. GHANA'S PRESS CONTINUES TO GIVE HEAVY COVERAGE TO MEETINGS OF AD HOC COMMITTEE ON UNION GOVERNMENT AND TO DEMONSTRATIONS IN SUPPORT OF THIS CONCEPT. IN APRIL ALONE, FOR EXAMPLE, ACCRA PAPERS RAN A TOTAL OF NEARLY 30 ARTICLES ON SUBJECT. CALLS FOR ACHEAMPONG TO BECOME PRESIDENT UNDER SUCH A NEW GOVERNMENT ARE WIDELY PUBLICIZED, AS ARE SUGGESTIONS THAT MILITARY AND POLICE SHOULD PLAY KEY ROLES IN NEW GOVERNMENT.

2. EDITORIAL COMMENT HAS BEEN SURPRISINGLY LIGHT THIS MONTH. GHANAIAAN TIMES, WHOSE EDITOR HAS BEEN PUSHING HARD FOR UNION GOVERNMENT, ATTACKED GHANA BAR ASSOCIATION ASSERTION (MADE APRIL 1 AT ACCRA SYMPOSIUM ON UNION GOVERNMENT) THAT UNION GOVERNMENT, AS A POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY, DOES NOT EXIST. TIMES PUBLISHED LIST OF ALL BRITISH GOVERNMENTS SINCE 1894 TO SUPPORT ITS ARGUMENT THAT BRITAIN ITSELF HAS HAD FOUR UNION GOVERNMENTS. (TIMES CLAIMED GOVERNMENTS OF MACDONALD, BALDWIN, CHAMERLAIN AND CHURCHILL IN 1931 - 1940 PERIOD WERE "NATIONAL, AS AGAINST THE REST, WHICH WERE EITHER PARTY GOVERNMENTS OR COALITIONS" AND ARE THEREFORE EQUIVALENT TO GHANA'S CONCEPT OF UNION GOVERNMENT.

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3. IN ADDITION, BEGINNING IN LATE MARCH, TIMES STARTED TO RUN SERIES OF FRONT PAGE Q'S AND A'S ON UNION GOVERNMENT WHICH ALMOST CERTAINLY REFLECT ACHEAMPONG'S VIEWS. SAMPLES:  
Q: WHAT IS MEANT BY UNION GOVERNMENT?  
A: UNION GOVERNMENT SIMPLY MEANS A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT FORMED BY ALL SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY -- THE CIVILIAN POPULATION,

THE ARMY AND THE POLICE.

Q: WILL THE UNION GOVERNMENT OPERATE ON A POLITICAL PARTY SYSTEM?

A: NO. THE ONE PARTY OR MULTIPARTY SYSTEM DIVIDES FRIENDS AND FAMILIES; IT BREEDS HATRED, RANCOUR, AND HOSTILITY; IT RETARDS PROGRESS. THE PARTY SYSTEM, THEREFORE, IS INIMICAL TO PEACEFUL SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. IT DISSIPATES ENERGIES IN FRUITLESS DEBATE AND COMPETITION. LASTLY, PARTY POLITICS IS ALIEN TO GHANA. IT IS A FOREIGN CONCEPT.

Q: WILL UNION GOVERNMENT PROMOTE AND MAINTAIN POLITICAL STABILITY?

A: THE PRINCIPAL RATIONALE FOR PROPOSING UNION GOVERNMENT IS THAT THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE ARMY AND POLICE IN THE GOVERNMENT WILL PROMOTE AND MAINTAIN POLITICAL STABILITY. NEITHER THE ARMY NOR THE POLICE CAN LEGITIMATELY TURN ROUND TO STAGE A COUP AGAINST A GOVERNMENT OF WHICH IT IS AN INTEGRAL PART.

4. STAGEMANAGED DEMONSTRATIONS IN FAVOR OF UNION GOVERNMENT HAVE BEEN HELD IN VARIOUS PARTS OF GHANA AND NUMEROUS INTEREST GROUPS (E.G., MUSLIMS, MARKET WOMEN, ETC.) HAVE -- ACCORDING TO PRESS -- COME OUT IN FAVOR OF IT. AD HOC COMMITTEE ON UNION GOVERNMENT HAS HELD ABOUT SIX MEETINGS THIS MONTH TO GATHER TESTIMONY. ACCORDING TO PRESS STORIES, MOST BUT NOT ALL PEOPLE WHO APPEAR BEFORE COMMITTEE SPEAK IN SUPPORT OF UNION GOVERNMENT. THOSE WHO SUGGEST ACHEAMPONG SHOULD BE MADE PRESIDENT OF SUCH A GOVERNMENT OR THAT THE MILITARY AND POLICE SHOULD PLAY KEY ROLES IN IT USUALLY HAVE THEIR COMMENTS REPORTED ON PAGE ONE. VIEWS OF NAY-SAYERS ARE MENTIONED ONLY IN PASSING AND AT TAIL END OF ARTICLES.

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5. FOLLOWING ITS APRIL 1 ATTACK, GHANA BAR ASSOCIATION HAS KEPT A LOW PROFILE. ONLY OTHER ORGANIZATION TO PUBLICLY ATTACK UNION GOVERNMENT THIS MONTH APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN "GHANA COMMUNITY OF WASHINGTON DC METROPOLITAN AREA." ACCORDING TO APRIL 2 ACCOUNT ON KUMASI PIONEER, THIS GROUP HELD JANUARY - FEBRUARY MEETINGS IN WASHINGTON TO DISCUSS CONCEPT AND WANTED "TO GO ON RECORD AS STRONGLY OPPOSED TO THE PROPOSED UNION GOVERNMENT." IT ADVOCATED INSTEAD AN IMMEDIATE RETURN TO PARTY POLITICS. THIS STORY WAS NOT PICKED UP BY PAPERS HERE IN ACCRA.

6. COMMENT: THE QUALITY OF DEBATE ON UNION GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN UNDERSTANDABLY LOW SINCE THE CONCEPT IS STILL ONLY HAZILY DEFINED AND THE GOG OBVIOUSLY DOES NOT WELCOME CRITICISM. WE DO NOT KNOW WHEN AD HOC COMMITTEE WILL COMPLETE HEARINGS OR WHAT FINDINGS IT WILL PRESENT TO ACHEAMPONG. THE ONLY THING PERFECTLY CLEAR IS THAT COMMITTEE WILL GIVE CONCEPT A CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH. UNLESS OVERTAKEN BY OTHER EVENTS,

ACHEAMPONG WILL THEN BE IN A POSITION TO INTRODUCE NEW GOVERN-  
MENT BY DECREE, MOST LIKELY WITH HIMSELF AS PRESIDENT.  
SMITH

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## Message Attributes

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